

Education and Peace

Abstract

We all agree with Nelson Mandela's quote "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." But education has its own challenges as it system fails to engage children in learning. As Benjamin Franklin has quite beautifully said: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." So the real challenge is how to engage children properly so they learn what we intend to teach them. There are number of mediums such as TV, Internet, computer and video games which can be used in education directly or indirectly as ways of engaging children. Video games are one of the most popular and engaging ones we however, it is not an established and accepted media for education and video games do raise ethical concerns. Sensitive content, such as violence, is not suitable for children and should not be available to them. Violent video games teach children concepts that are not suitable and intended to be for them. Therefore more strict policies and regulations should be in place to prevent such content being available for children and accessible to them. It is our responsibility to ask for it where there is a lack of such. We also need to question their rating systems and ask for more accurate ones so the system becomes mistake proof. More importantly we need to change the values and trends in a way that game developers not to consider educational and ethical games boring, so we can develop suitable video games for children that can compete with current popular violent games. Moreover and at the same time we need to focus on peace and nonviolent techniques and teach them to our children. And we of course need to make the education system more interesting and engaging by using innovative tools and attractive mediums, so the children become more interested and engaged so children learn what they are supposed to learn.

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Need for Peace

Invention of modern weapons has created a destabilized situation and environment where many people feel insecure and vulnerable. The weapons that have been created to protect people have caused threats to them (Harris & Morrison, 2012). As a result some believe that they need weapons to protect themselves, and some expect violence would protect them from violence. Also there is a general belief that countries with strong militaries have more power and expected to rule the world and dominate other countries. These general believes push people to link power with violence. Do

we really need violence to protect ourselves from violence? Do we need to have and use arms and gun for our safety? If so, how far are we going with accepting, encouraging and showing violence? When does the violence end? What happened to the nonviolence techniques and efforts of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.?

The term 'peace' does not just indicate the absence of obvious violence. It also relates to the presence of social, economic and political justice which are critical to the concept of 'positive peace' (Hicks, 1985). Peace is a dynamic condition of life and a long-term process that never stops. It is based on life practices and world values (Clarke-Habibi, 2005). It is a multi-directional activity which needs to be approached from different aspects and directions and at different levels.

Due to internet and social media, the world seems smaller and people have become closer together, more connected and more concerned about what is going on in our world. Global issues have become local (Sharma, 2012) and local issues turn to become global. All the people, nations, cultures, and societies, leaders and organizations at any location in the world, and no matter whether they are directly experiencing violence and hostility are demanding for peace and requesting justice and nonviolence for themselves and for others.

Peace Education

The definition of peace education is based on a simple and basic assumption, which is the peaceful resolution of conflict and prevention of violence, whether interpersonal or social, obscure or transparent, fundamental or unnecessary, is a positive value to be promoted on a global level through education (Fountain, 1999).

Education is the most effective way to develop an aversion to violence and war. Nelson Mandela says: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.". Children need to learn nonviolence struggle, negotiation, reconciliation, empathy and sympathy. They need to learn peaceful techniques and strategies so they can stand for themselves, others, their society and the world peacefully and away from judgment and violence. Children need to learn peaceful techniques to deal with challenges and problem in peaceful way instead of using violence. This is the only way we can stop war, hate and violence.

The goal of peace education is to create a conscious commitment in humans towards what is going on in the world. Development of consciousness turns to the creation of ways of peace and development of more peace-oriented worldviews. Peace education is to transform societies by developing an awareness that condemns violence and intense behavior and activities. Educating peace requires transformation of the way of our thinking that has been developed over the millions years history of mankind. It also requires long term solutions as well as planning (Fountain, 1999). Moreover it involves

transforming our inner hearts and minds at early stage. It also requires transformation of our education system as learning reflects in action. Conversely the current education system is not without challenges. Benjamin Franklin has quite beautifully said: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.". We need to involve our children instead of just telling them so they can truly learn.

Peace education movements should be done in the contexts of family, school, religion, culture, as well as politics and media, and in any other levels of our life. It requires a universal attitude and position, and an integrated and unified approach. Peace education programs need to develop a comprehensive and integrative program that creates transformation in psychosocial, political, moral and spiritual conditions. A properly peace-oriented approach would challenge us to start with ourselves and establish peace internally, to engage and communicate peacefully and respectfully with others, prepare ourselves for the creation and maintenance of peace in our daily life including our personal lives and professions, and also to be sensitive to what is going on in our communities and our world and further be involved in great movements towards peace that is already happening in our societies and communities (Fountain, 1999). Thus, education of peace should be done at both personal and social levels and also in formal and non-formal ways to be effective. These days most schools, communities, companies and organizations plan such activities as part of bringing awareness and also raising money for their charities.

Peace education is a multidisciplinary and versatile matter that teaches nonviolent alternatives for managing conflict, and skills for critical analysis of structural arrangements that produce and legitimize injustice and inequality (Harris and Synott, 2002). Peace education includes but not limited conflict resolution, human rights, international understanding, social justice, nonviolence, environmental issues and responsibilities, communication skills, democracy, coexistence and gender equality. It also encourages self-esteem, cooperation, empathy, trust, awareness, assertiveness, appreciation and acceptance of diversities and differences.

Behavior is an indicator of individual, family or group's values. Behavior development is basically linked to the values of these groups and dependent on them. These values can either contribute to promoting peace and peace related activities or obstruct them. Peace education promotes behavioral changes through development of new values and norms. This is more effective when strategies are used to address the values of individuals as well as the entire community (Fountain, 1999). The process of changing behavior is through a sequence of stages, which an individual becomes aware of an issue followed by his/her concern about it. He/she acquires knowledge, information and skills that are related to that issue, and becomes motivated about the new values and attitudes. Then he/she starts to act by trying out the new behavior and starts practicing and promoting them. These steps can be done in the same above order or simultaneously, and are a comprehensive approach to peace education (Fountain, 1999).

Teaching proper behavior is easier than changing an old and established one. So it is important to start from early ages and teach children peace-promoting values which they are young and have fresh mind. The real challenge is how to engage children properly in educational programs so they learn what they are supposed to learn deeply and thoroughly. Research has shown awareness is the most critical step in any education, and is the most effective way to develop a disapproval and disagreement to violence and war. A study was done in San Francisco on a group of 1355 individuals. They were asked: "Are these causes worth fighting a nuclear war for?". %10 of the responses were "Yes". After watching a presentation on medical effects of nuclear, %50 of the peoples who had responded "Yes", changed their answers to "No" (Garriel and Carins, 2012). Therefore, teachers and parents have a critical role in educating children and should use communicative tools to create new meanings by increasing awareness and knowledge, and creating a peaceful generation, and ultimately change disturbing and negative believes and values. Parents can use nonviolent techniques and loving and caring language in raising their children, and teachers can teach peacemaking skills to their students and also aware them of the problems and consequences of war and violence. Also, teachers can promote active learning methods, teamwork, active citizenship and also teach their students a climate of tolerance, acceptance and respect which is the concept of "*learning to live together*" (Toh, 2002).

Role of conflict in peace

We cannot deny the role of conflict is our daily lives. Conflict can easily turn to violence and create hostility and aggression. However, it is natural and part of communication and life. Conflicts are usually based on differences. Social conflicts are from differences in physical, gender, sexual orientation and mental abilities or disabilities. Discrimination, harassment, and prejudice, often creates personal and institutional reactions and conflicts. These conflicts are complex as they are related to prejudice and discrimination in cultural and social differences but also to inequality and privilege (Crawford and Bodine, 1996). The result of conflicts can be chaos and violence and also can be an opportunity for creativity, learning and creation. The challenge is to learn and apply the principles of creative cooperation and techniques of conflict resolution in our relationships (Crawford and Bodine, 1996). An effective peace education program would address these techniques and principals to turn a possible hostile environment to a pleasant, agreeable and understanding one. To be fundamentally successful, peace educators should aim to transform peoples from a conflict-orientation to a peace-orientation attitude (Clarke-Habibi, 2005).

Eliminating conflict is impossible; so it is important that children learn productive ways to face conflict from early ages and also learn to use them to create new ideas and values. Usually conflicts come from an attachment to a subject and are accompanied by raw emotions like anger, uncertainty, fear and stress (Salomon and Jain, 2012). The ability to manage and resolve disputes and disagreements nonviolently and effectively is essential to the

peaceful expression of human rights. Responsible citizens in a free and healthy environment and society express their concerns peacefully and seek resolutions to problems by taking into account common interests and recognizing the human dignity of all involved individuals and parties.

Conflict resolution strategies can reduce violence and destruction, and helps involved individuals to deepen their understanding of themselves and others and also develops important life skills and increases their listening abilities as well as critical thinking, and problem solving skills. By teaching peace-oriented conflict management, the children get trained in negotiation, mediation, and consensus decision-making. All these techniques and skills stay with them and can help them in their adulthood (Crawford and Bodine, 1996).

Role of video Games in Children Education

Video games are one of the mediums that are mainly developed for amusement and pleasure, and can be used for children education directly or indirectly. Video games have been around for more than forty years and are one of the most popular and engaging typed of media. Video games are becoming more popular and accessible to all ages especially children. Despite the popularity of video games, there is a tremendous concern about their usefulness based on the general belief that these games are more associated with distraction from education and laziness than a useful and effective tool for education (Walsh, 2007). Thus, video games are one of the most controversial types of media. Video games transport game players to a new world and allow them to explore and experiment new life.

There are plenty of appropriate video games for children, which can be beneficial to them. These games bring players pleasure and are helpful for release of stress. Also, it is believed that the video games are one of the best tools and mediums for teaching children, specifically in indirect ways. Similarly some believe that video games are better at teaching logic and problem solving skills than many school curriculums. Children are usually learning by imitating and repeating the actions of others and become excited and motivated by rewards. Repetition would increase learning and reward would encourage children to try harder and would increase learning. As video games are based on reward system and require a great deal of repetition and clearly they can be suitable as a learning tool (Walsh, 2007). There is a difference between video games and other type of media. Video games are the only type of media that the player is in communication and interaction with the game characters and sometime with other players who can be strangers. In movies the viewer is only watching the scenes and the incidents of the movie however, the player is directly participating in the game and its actions and plays a role and reacts towards the other game characters and other players.

Types of Video Games

Video games can be played competitively or cooperatively, socially or non-socially, with other players present or online or alone, and on various devices

(Granic et al, 2014). There are different types of video games (No Author, 2014):

- Action games, which are fast-paced and contain a large amount of violence. These games are mostly marked as "M" (mature-rated) and are not appropriate for children.
- Adventure and role playing games which usually are less violent than action games and contain an element of fantasy.
- Strategy games which are mostly involved with tactical movement of troops and/or players. These games can be appropriate for children but usually are difficult to play.
- Simulation games are often aircraft simulations. The player gets to fly a jet or a helicopter or drive a tank and get to destroy anything that comes on the way.
- Driving games are most often racing, but can also crash derbies and people.
- Puzzle games are based on thinking and logic skills and are almost never rated higher than 'E' (for everyone).

Some games such as puzzles, problem solving games, adventure games, and strategic games are helping children to use different types of their skills by improving related skills. For example adventure games tend to teach logic because players have to discover where to go and what to do at what point in time in order to progress to the next level; and puzzle game will teach problem solving skills to those engaged in it, so playing and solving puzzles is one way to enhance this type of skill.

Unfortunately currently violent (war) games are one of the most popular categories in video games. Using weapons in video games gives false power and strength to the players without the need for dealing with its consequences. As a result, children learn that they can use violence and gun to move to the next step of the game and learn that killing someone or destroying a barrier is a way to overcome an obstacle. They also learn that there are no consequences for damaging something or killing someone. In such games when someone is killed, there is no blood or pain. The child who plays such violent game does not experience the fear and what is involved with a violence attack, injury and/or death and also doesn't understand there are consequences for harming and killing someone, and destroying something. Similarly the dead character in a game doesn't bleed, doesn't have any pain and get his/her life back right away. The violence experience in games is different than in reality. In real life, people bleed, hurt, and die and there are always consequences for the one who is violent and harm others. Researches show that playing violent video games may increase a player's aggressive thoughts, feelings and behavior not only in virtual world but also in real life. Video games are completely different than other types of media as they are interactive and are designed in a way to actively engaged players (Granic et al, 2014). Playing these games for a short-term may create aggressive thoughts and spending long-term playing violent games may cause the player learn and practice new aggressive techniques in real-life conflict situations. Even some believe and say that playing violent video

games were a major cause of some of the high school shootings in US. But video games can have positive effects as well. Another study shows that such learning is much deeper than common ways of learning. Children can learn problem solving and strategic thinking by playing video games. They learn collaboration and leadership skills. They make ethical and moral decisions throughout the game, and depending on what they decide and act, they would see the result of each of their decisions and would learn to deal with their consequences. Also there have been arguments that characters in video games are not real and also video game violence is abstract and generally consist of blasting objects and spaceships or stylized aliens (Dietz, 1998). However new video games are becoming increasingly realistic which rejects the gaming characters being unrealistic and abstract (Walsh, 2001). As video games are becoming more and more realistic, the violent video games and their availability have raised concern among many. Children's brain cannot distinguish such games easier as it is not fully developed, and they should not acquire violent games and should not be playing with such games. A young mind can't distinguish between fantasy and reality and should not be subject to violence until they are emotionally ready for it. Children have a nonviolence nature when they are born. The first thing a baby sees is her/his loving mothers' face and smile; the first thing he/she experiences is his/her father's protective arms and the first thing they learn is to smile. They have hope, love, care and happiness and their nature is not violent.

There are some games available that the player literally can do anything that he cannot do in real life unless he/she wanted to go to jail. A classic example is Grand Theft Auto (GTA). The player is placed into the role of a drug dealer. There is no restriction on player's actions in GTA; for instance the player can steal cars, rob stores, run over pedestrians, shoot and kill anyone in the game, pick up prostitutes and even get scores from their services! A different example is Peace Maker; a game designed by a former Israeli officer which is pitched as "a video game to promote peace". This game challenges the player to succeed as a leader and deal with real-life issues and practice where real leaders have not been able to come up with peaceful solutions. It gives the player an opportunity to try and see if he/she can bring peace to the Middle East or continue the war.

Issues related to video games

Clearly the use and role of video gaming is increasing rapidly as an entertainment media and like any other kind of media, it is not far from controversial and challenging issues. Some believe that like any other media video gaming is addictive, and also sometimes their content is so violent that causes concerns for families, schools and societies. At the same time no one denies the role of video games in education and teaching new skills. Video games can affect the players both positively and negatively and here are some of the most important effects of video games:

Video games and ethics

One main issue related to the video games is that whether they are ethical. Both children and adults can learn from playing video games. Some are beneficial while others are believed to be immoral. Some players and developers argue that video games are better at teaching logic and problem solving skills than many school curriculums. While others say that video games teach people to become more violent due to practicing the violence in the game. The connection between violent media and aggression has been a subject of research in the last decade. New research on video games have shown that the exposure of children to violent media can make children behave and react in more hostile ways and act more aggressively in their real world than the ones who have not spent lots of time playing with such games (Park, 2014). A research study done by Craig Anderson, director of the center for the study of violence at Iowa State University, on media violence shows that children who are exposed to media violation tend to see the world in a more aggressive way and act more aggressively. This research shows that repeated exposure to violent games can increase aggressive thinking and behavior (Anderson et al, 2014). The question that some people bring up is that knowing the possibility of the effects of violent games, whether it is ethical to design, develop, manufacture and sell such games.

Video Game Rating

Like any other media, the gaming industry has a certain social responsibility. Some believe that by creating the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) in the US and Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) in the UK and other European countries, the industry has taken a big step in fulfilling their social responsibility. These groups and boards have created and put in place rating systems for aging and content rating the video games.

ESBR is a non-profit and self-regulatory body that was established in 1994. The purpose of its establishment was to assign age and content ratings, enforce advertising guidelines for industry, and ensure responsible online privacy principles for computer and video games are in place and followed in the US and Canada. ESRB has established a rating system contains three parts:

- Rating Categories which suggest age appropriateness
- Content Descriptors which indicates the content that may be of interest or concern
- Interactive Elements which inform about interactive aspects of a product, including players' ability to interact with others, the sharing of players' location with other players, or that the player's personal information may be shared with third parties

Also the ESRB has an enforcement system which allows for harsh sanctions like product recall, up to \$1 million fine, and stickering of the game in retail stores for instances where there is a significant content non-disclosure. There are less serious penalties for less serious nonconformance and violations which are lower fines and mandated corrective actions (esrb.org, 2014). The

ESRB's Advertising Review Council (ARC) diligently monitors industry's compliance, and in case a game publisher has inappropriately labeled or advertised a product, the ESRB would enforce penalties and corrective actions (esrb.org, 2014). This rating system has accepted and adopted by the gaming industry and is in use. However, the main issue is the accuracy of the ratings as the determination to whether or not a game meets the criteria within the statute is with the developer and/or the distributor of the game. This means the game developer and/or the game distributor determines the ratings and decide(s) what to put on the packaging as rating. Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston randomly selected 25 of 147 M-rated video games. They played each game for one hour and compared their findings with the description on the packaging, and discovered inconsistency in the content descriptors (Newswire, 2006).

Video Games and violence

Violence in video games is defined as acts in which game characters cause or attempt to cause physical injury or death to another character that is in the game (Kalning, 2006). Such games involve punching, kicking, shooting, stabbing, and blunt trauma towards the game character or another player (Baily et al, 2011). In a study at the Indiana University School of Medicine, researchers used advanced brain-scanning technology and looked at brain activities of gamers while they were playing violent game. Brain scans of these individuals showed an increase in emotional arousal along with a decrease in attention, self-control, and inhibition (Kalning, 2006). Another study by Willenz and his team showed that playing violent video games can intensify and increase a person's aggressive feelings, thoughts and behavior (Willenz, 2000). The same group of researchers have shown prolonged aggressive behavior is likely to result as a long-term effect as gamers would practice his/her new behavioral skills and aggression and become more comfortable with these new feelings, emotions and behaviors, and ultimately showing them in real life and when real life situations arise (Willenz, 2000). A research study that was done on reviewing and evaluating 33 video games showed that 79 (26 games) had some type of aggression and violence and 27 (9 games) had aggression in sporting event. This review showed that nearly 50 (16 games) of the games had violence and aggression directly towards another character of the game (Dietz, 1998). It is also shown that exposure to such games would change the experience of positive emotions and desensitize players to violent. Desensitization is defined as decrease in emotional reaction to real violence such as helping and also feeling empathy toward victims of violence or injury. It is also reported that such individuals are less likely respond to an emergency situations and if so, their respond time is slower than the ones who has not played such violent video games (Baily et al, 2010).

Video Games and education

There is no doubt that video games are a powerful learning tool. There are several specific games teaching various subjects such as biology, math and algebra, cooking, photography and computer programming that directly teach children and adults. Playing games could be beneficial and directly teach them various subjects. In general video games encourage children to navigate through complex problems, which require them to think fast and experiment different ways to achieve the goal of the game (Anderson and Warburton, 2012). They can teach children various skills such as problem solving skills and logic. These games are categorized as strategic and adventure games and puzzles. Strategic and adventure games teach children logic as the players have to discover where to go and what to do to overcome an obstacle, and how to get to the next level and how and when to use the various tools. These games are more effective when the game developers do not explain how the game should be played and the games come with limited instruction. In these situations the players have to figure out the details by themselves and doing trial and error which helps them with the innovative way of thinking and problem solving skills. Puzzles are also useful to children by teaching them to use their logic and problem solving skills to come up with ways to solve a problem, or use their vocabulary and math skills to overcome a situation and resolve a problem (Anderson and Warburton, 2012).

Aggression and Video Games

Studies have shown that playing violent games would increase aggressive and hostile thoughts, emotions, behaviors and actions. The severity of the type of negative emotions and characters depend on the type and length of playing such video games. Also there is a strong relationship between hostility, and aggressive behavior with mental problems such as depression and negative self-perception. It can also cause children to see the world as a hostile and non-friendly place (Walsh, 2007).

Role of Women in video game

Some games are ill representative of women and are portraying women as weak and sexual objects. Such games are encouraging gender stereotyping and gender discrimination indirectly. In most games women are portrayed as visions of beauty with small waste and large breasts who are usually wearing tight and short clothes with flashy colors (Dietz, 1998). Many of the games neglect to include women as characters at all and when there are female characters in the game, the portrayed female characters are often presented as victims, dependent upon men, less contributing than men or in supporting roles to men. Women were also frequently presented as sex objects and victims of violence including sexual violence (Dietz, 1998). A study was done by reviewing and evaluating 33 video games based on portrayals of female characters. The result showed that only %15 (5 games) of the games had portrayed women as heroes and main action character. In all of these five games women were wearing tight clothing. This study showed that %21 (7 games) of the reviewed games had portrayed women as victims and had

aggression and violence towards women. The women in this group had tight clothing as well (Dietz, 1998). Overall, in this sample of video games, while there are instances in which female characters were portrayed as positive role models, the roles of females in most of the games were minimized. A more recent research study suggests that in general video games and media show negative attitudes towards women and also violence behavior against them. Even some video games show sexual objectification and sexual violence against women (Beck et al, 2012).

Attention Deficit and video games

There are some studies that show a correlation between the amounts of time children spend playing video games with attention deficit and hyperactivity (Baily et al, 2010). It is suggested that the level and amount of the time the children played video games and the type of the played video games are effective on the loss of their attention (Anderson et al, 2012). At the same time some games require players to respond to unexpected stimulants rapidly and unexpectedly. These games require players to quickly modify their behavior and/or change their location. Thus, such games require players to maintain their attention during the course of the game (Baily et al, 2010).

Addiction and video games

Like any other media, playing video games can be addictive. Spending excessive time on playing video games would prevent children from interacting with other children in real life, doing their homework which would isolate them from their family and friends, and causing social isolation. Video games create a virtual and imaginary environment and life, which allows players to escape from their real life and when the reality is dissatisfying and their real life. However some believe that this could be a symptom of a bigger problem rather than just a simple addiction to playing video games. Game addiction is a form of psychological addiction related to compulsive use of computers and video games (Bach and Jordan, 2004). Another study suggests that video game players seem to experience a dopamine-induced experience. Such players usually crave playing the game like any kind of addiction (Bach and Jordan, 2004).

Video games and school performance

Spending long hours playing video games is directly linked with children's poor performance at school (Anderson et al, 2007). This can be explained easily that children spend the time on playing video games instead of doing their homework, reading and studying on playing video games. This is not just limited to playing video games and any excessive activity could effect on their school performance. There is also a possibility that excessive video gaming creates attention deficit which leads to poor performance (Anderson and Warburton, 2012). Also a report by Anand on college students shows the

same correlation between the time they spent on playing video games and their grades. The students who spent more time on playing video games had lower academic grades and also had less participation in social and extra curriculum activities (Anand, 2007).

Cognitive benefits of video gaming

Playing video games could promote a wide range of cognitive skills. Children can benefit from “faster and more accurate attention allocation, higher spatial resolution in visual processing and enhanced mental rotation abilities” (Granic et al, 2014). Also video games are excellent source for developing problem solving skills. Furthermore, more games come with limited amount of information on how to play or use the necessary tools or how to overcome an obstacle. As a result children learn their way around the game by exploring different solutions based on trial and error (Granic et al, 2014). All these skills are transferable and can help the children outside the world of video gaming and during their adulthood. However, research performed by Baily and her team has shown high amounts of playing video games may be associated with decrease in efficiency or processes that are involved in cognitive control (Baily et al, 2010).

Motivational benefits of video gaming

Gaming industry has developed the video games in such a way that players can become persistent, motivated, optimistic and excited. Playing right games in proper amount could create motivational and behavioral benefits in children and they may and can use these attitudes to as real life tools and techniques their school and work contexts (Granic et al, 2014).

Emotional Benefits of video gaming

Playing video games helps children to develop an array of positive and negative feelings such as frustration, anger, anxiety, sadness, acceptance, problem solving and reappraisal. Video games continuously provide novel challenges which demand players to shift the already received appraisals to new ones. It seems playing video games would teach children to regulate and manage their emotions (Granic et al, 2014).

Some Solutions

Both industry and parents should acknowledge their part and act more responsibly and diligently. We cannot put the whole responsibility on one group and expect only one group has to deal with the issues and challenges while ignoring the roles of others. All involved parties and groups should accept their share of responsibility and we all come up with solution which is exactly the base of resolving conflicts in a peaceful manner.

Gaming industry should accept their social responsibilities by being more proactive in designing and developing the games in coming up with more stimulating games that are less violent; and also being honest in rating the games. Moreover, both ARC and ESRB need to be more active and monitor the industry more diligently so the game industry would follow the established system.

Parents also should pay more attention to their children and how they spend their time in front of their computers and gaming equipment. Unfortunately many parents do not pay enough attention to the ratings of these games and let their children play inappropriate ones. Parents should monitor their children behavior and be aware of what they do especially while spending time by computer. Moreover, they should be pay attention and be sensitive to any behavioral changes and take any small violent act seriously. Furthermore parents should limit the time their children spend playing video games and monitor what they play and with whom. They should also obtain video games that are suitable for children's age and are developing a range of developmental and educational objectives and help their children to get ready for a peaceful future away from violence, war and objectivity.

Additionally children should learn to self-regulate what they hear and watch, and be open and in communication with their parents and teachers. Thus, it is critical that children be aware of the effects of media especially video games.

Video games for peace

Action video games are the most popular types of games which are mostly violent and not suitable for children. It is believed that violent video games are more harmful than beneficial and would make children hostile and violent. In general belief, such games should not be accessible to children. Thus, the rating system that is developed and established by ESRB needs to be improved and more accurate description should be required for the content of the games and also, the manufacturers and distributors should be more responsible and accurate when it comes to assigning the ratings to their games.

Some believe that selling inappropriate video games to children should be illegal, and there have been several attempts to make it illegal to sell violent video games to children but they most failed mainly because the industry is all about selling their games and making money. Some states in the US like California have passed a law that selling video games with adult content to children is a crime. Also some countries like Canada have stricter rule and regulations when it comes to video gaming and children. In the US some people believe that the law against selling video games with adult content to children is against the protection of their rights, more specifically the First Amendment right to free speech. In some states the Supreme Court of the United States supports this group that ban on selling video games to children is violence of First Amendment right to free speech!

It would be nice if the video game industry would openly discuss whether the use of violence in video games is artistic or gratuitous. It is also the time for a self-evaluation by the game industry to ask where the industry's biggest games are pushing: to move forward or to find new places and new ways to kill things. The video gaming industry sees the problems and also the need for better, deeper and more involving stories. Greg Zeschuk, Canadian co-founder of BioWare who resigned last year, says: "Enough with the shooting. Figure out another type of productive conflict, building, creating."; and Dan Connors, American independent digital publisher, says: "this can be the moment in which games started to create characters you cared about and characters who felt real." (No Author, 2005).

Reviewing the benefits and harms of playing video games shows they could benefit children tremendously. Based on the result of the performed research, it seems there are differences in video games and playing them. Some games improve attention and some do not; and some games are associated with reduction in efficiency of cognitive control and some improve this center (Baily et al, 2010). So, it can be assumed that playing video games are useful and beneficial unless the games are violent and/or are being played excessively. There is nothing wrong with moderately playing video games. The problem starts when it becomes excessive and hostile. However, these positive and negative effects depend on the type of the game and not all the games have the same effect at the same level (Anderson et al, 2012). Considering the benefits and harms of video games, they can be developed for prevention and treatment of mental health problems and promote well-being. Playing video games can be stimulating and helps children's brain develop faster and also teaches children skills that would help them during their whole life; and this is what the peace education is all about.

Conclusion

Peace education has the potential to become a major inspiration in our education system as well as our communities and society. The successful peace education models could be used at schools and communities worldwide. Only through such models and programs, we can implement the envision goals for a more peaceful world. Peace education is not all about teaching war is bad; it also teaches skills and techniques to resolve conflicts, problems and issues more effectively and furthermore encourages people to see beyond their own world. To make fundamental changes, the education should start from early childhood and young ages as children are our hope for a better future. Peace education should start from children and schools by creating supportive and healthy environments, proper learning tools and using strategies that improve and promote children's skillset and thinking. Video games are the best engaging mediums used in teaching. Playing video games can teach children the skills they need to be successful in their life such as problem solving, persistency, courage, taking risk, logic, moderation, motivation and reward. However engaging in video games do raise ethical concerns. Sensitive and violent content are not suitable for children and should not be available to them. Violent video games teach children concepts

that are not appropriate for them. Therefore more strict policies and regulations should be in place to prevent such content being available and accessible for and to children. It's our responsibility to ask for tighter regulation where there is a lack of such. We also need to act responsibly and monitor our children while playing games. More importantly, we need to change the values and trends in a way that game developers not to consider educational and ethical games boring. So they develop ethical video games more engaging and attractive the games would compete with current popular violent games. The video game developers should develop new and engaging games that bring up real life and correct social and environmental issues. Such games should close the gap between education and entertainment and make learning fun and pleasant. Furthermore, we, of course need to make the education system more interesting and engaging so children learn more effectively what they are supposed to learn.

“If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.” - Mahatma Gandhi

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